



ALLEGHENY COUNTY

ALWAYS INSPIRING

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 14, 2020

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Midwest Direct to Reissue Corrected Ballots to County Voters

Mailing to be Completed by October 17 with Most Ballots Delivered Week of October 19

PITTSBURGH – The Elections Division announced today that a ballot image mapping error by the company contracted to handle the printing, collating and mailing of ballots has resulted in 28,879 voters in Allegheny County receiving incorrect ballots. Those mailings are being corrected and new, correct ballots will be delivered to the post office beginning on Thursday, October 15 through Saturday, October 17. Most are expected to be delivered to voters the week of October 19.

The mailing by Midwest Direct is from a batch of 32,318 voters whose date of mailing shows in the state ballot tracker as September 28, 2020. There were no issues with the county data, but a ballot image mapping error by Midwest resulted in individual voter's information being matched to the ballot for the next voter in that batch.

On Friday, October 9, 2020, the Elections office received communications from approximately 20 county voters who received their mail-in or absentee ballot packets but found that they had been sent the wrong ballot. Division staff immediately reached out to Midwest Direct to suspend mailings and directed the company to begin investigating what occurred. As elections identified impacted voters, the ballots were reissued in-house, but no ballots were sent out after Friday.

Midwest Direct identified and corrected the issue yesterday, October 13, and began printing the correct ballots for voters. Moving forward, a printout of the first and last 10 records will be generated for every file showing which images are being used. That printout will be compared to the actual printed ballots before inserting to verify correct images have been pulled. A second data processor will also review the files to create a two-person check.

Beginning this morning, Elections Division staff is manually locating and segregating all ballots received from voters that were included in this batch. Those ballots will be set aside and reviewed as part of the Return Board process following the election. Only one ballot will be counted per voter.

The corrected, re-issued ballots will be identified on the envelope that the voter receives. Additionally, the declaration envelope will also have identification on it to indicate that it is the envelope that should be used to return the corrected ballot. Only one ballot will be counted for each voter.

Midwest Direct had 19,564 ballots that were set to be delivered to the post office when this error was first reported. That initial run has been destroyed and the ballots are being reprinted. The print will be verified and the ballot packets will be delivered on Wednesday and Thursday to the post office. The mailing includes those ballots showing in the state's ballot tracker as having been mailed on October 3 and October 5, 2020.

As an additional security measure, voters who are included in this batch of ballots will not be able to have a new ballot issued except through this mailing until October 26. Voters who have not received their corrected ballot by October 26 may go to the downtown office of the Elections Division, or contact the office, for a reissuance.

Within the next 24 hours, the Elections Division will have a search feature available on its webpage that will allow voters, using their name or voter ID number, to determine if they are part of the impacted batch. In the

interim, voters may use the state's [online ballot tracker](#) to look up when their ballot was mailed. It can be found in the column "Ballot Mailed On." If the date is 09/28/2020, you may have received an incorrect ballot.

Voters may always view the sample ballot for their municipality, ward and district on the county's [webpage](#). If a voter is unsure of his or her municipality, ward and district, they can use the state's "[Find Voter Registration Status](#)" tool. On the page, where the polling place address is listed, the municipality, ward and district are also found.

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Jerry Tyskiewicz, Director

Department of Administrative Services – Division of Elections

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**Statement by David Voye, Manager of the Elections Division
October 14, 2020**

Good morning. Thank you for joining us.

My name is Dave Voye and I am the Elections Division Manager. With me today are Chet Harhut, Deputy Division Manager; Jerry Tyskiewicz, Administrative Services Director; Andy Szefi, County Solicitor; and Al Opsitnick, Assistant County Solicitor.

This past Friday, we announced that we had received communications from approximately 20 county voters who received their mail-in or absentee ballot packets but found that they had been sent the wrong ballot.

Division staff immediately reached out to Midwest Direct, our vendor which the county contracted with to handle the printing, collating and mailing of ballots, about the problem. The company was directed to suspend mailings immediately and to begin investigating what occurred. The division staff began creating a list of identified, impacted voters and reissued a number of ballots for those voters.

On Friday evening, we posted information to that effect on the Election's webpage, on the county's social media channels and issued the same to voters through Allegheny Alerts and NextDoor. We also provided the same to media in response to inquiries. We have continued to add to that list, and reissued ballots throughout the weekend and holiday, although no ballots were mailed out after Friday.

After ongoing communications with Midwest Direct, we were notified yesterday by the company that they had identified the error and were able to tell us the number of impacted voters. There were no issues with the county data, but a ballot image mapping error by Midwest has resulted in 28,879 voters in Allegheny County receiving incorrect ballots.

The mailing by Midwest Direct is from a batch of 32,318 voters whose date of mailing shows in the state ballot tracker as September 28, 2020. The mapping error resulted in individual voter's information being matched to the ballot for the next voter in that batch.

Midwest Direct identified and corrected the issue yesterday, October 13, and began printing the correct ballots for voters. Moving forward, Midwest will create a printout of the first and last 10 records which will be generated for every file showing which images are being used. That printout will be compared to the actual printed ballots before inserting to verify correct images have been pulled. A second data processor will also review the files to create a two-person check.

Beginning this morning, Elections Division staff is manually locating and segregating all ballots received from voters that were included in this batch. Those ballots will be set aside and reviewed as part of the Return Board process following the election.

New, correct ballots are being sent to all 28,879 voters. Those ballot packets will be delivered to the post office beginning on Thursday, October 15 through Saturday, October 17. Most are expected to be delivered to voters the week of October 19.

The corrected, re-issued ballots will be identified on the envelope that the voter receives. Additionally, the declaration envelope will also have identification on it to indicate that it is the envelope that should be used to return the corrected ballot. Only one ballot will be counted for each voter.

As an additional security measure, voters who are included in this batch of ballots will not be able to have a new ballot issued except through this mailing until October 26. Voters who have not received their corrected

ballot by October 26 may go to the downtown office of the Elections Division, or contact the office, for a reissuance.

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Voters may always view the sample ballot for their municipality, ward and district on the county's [webpage](#). If a voter is unsure of his or her municipality, ward and district, they can use the state's "[Find Voter Registration Status](#)" tool. On the page, where the polling place address is listed, the municipality, ward and district are also found.

As of this morning, the division has approved applications for 371,062 voters. Of those, approximately 35,000-40,000 are remaining to be mailed.

Midwest Direct had 19,564 ballots that were being processed but had not yet been printed. That batch will now be verified, printed and the ballot packets will be delivered on Wednesday and Thursday to the post office. The mailing includes those ballots showing in the state's ballot tracker as having been mailed on October 3 and October 5, 2020.

Once the re-issuance of ballots is complete this weekend, Midwest Direct will verify, print and prepare the ballot packets for the remaining 30,000 voters.

The integrity of our election system is of utmost importance to me as the Elections Division Manager and to our entire team. Voters in this county should be confident that their votes are accurately counted and protected. Our very system of government depends on free and fair elections and nothing underscores that more than a presidential election.

In 2016, a total of 660,009 Allegheny County voters cast ballots in the presidential election. We are on pace to see that turnout figure be even higher in this election. With a little under three weeks to go, it is imperative that we ensure that our election system is one which voters can trust.

I pledge to be fair and transparent in the work that we are doing, and about the work being done on our behalf. This was a failure on behalf of our contractor that impacts too many of our voters. I apologize for it and commit to you that I will do everything in my power to ensure that we are not plagued by any other such issues.

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